

REMARKS

Interview Summary

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for taking the time to discuss this case on June 17, 2005. During the interview, amendments to claim 12 were discussed, although no agreement was reached.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-16, and 27 are pending in the present application. Applicants have amended claim 7 to correct an error in punctuation. This amendment was presented in the Amendment and Response previously filed on April 20, 2005; however, the Advisory action mailed on April 28, 2005, does not indicate whether the amendment was entered. Therefore Applicants have again presented the amendment to claim 7 herein.

Furthermore, Applicants have amended claims 12-16 to clarify the subject matter claimed in light of the Examiner's comments in the Advisory Action mailed April 28, 2005. Support for the amendments to claims 12-16 can be found throughout the application as originally filed. Applicants submit that these amendments add no new matter.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for allowing claims 1, 3-10 and 27.

Rejections under 102(b)

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the patentability of claims 12-16 in light of the amendments presented herein. Claims 12-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Astle *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 3,713,985, hereinafter "Astle"). Applicants have amended claim 12 to recite "a first wall on said well strip" and "a second wall on said well strip." The claim has further been amended to recite "a first engagement piece on said first wall of said well strip"..."and a first engagement piece on said second wall of said well strip" to clarify that the first engagement piece on the first wall and the first engagement piece on the second wall are on the same well strip. As stated in the claims, the first engagement piece on the first wall is identical to the first engagement piece on the second wall. However, Astle does not teach a first engagement piece on a first wall of a well strip that is identical to a first engagement piece on a second wall of the same well strip. Astle only teaches a device with male members or edges for interlocking (reference characters 18 and 19 of Figures 1 and 2) on one side of the device and female members or grooves for interlocking (reference

characters 20 and 21 of Figures 1 and 2) on the other side of the device. In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, Astle does not teach a device with a male member present on one side that is identical to a male member on the other side. Nor does Astle teach a device with a female member on one side that is identical to a female member on the other side. Accordingly, Astle does not provide the claimed element and fails as an anticipatory reference under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Consequently, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 12, and claims 13-16 depending therefrom, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner return an initialed copy of the PTO Form-1449 submitted on July 1, 2004. Applicants respectfully request that the initialed PTO Form-1449 accompany the next office communication in response to this paper.

Power of Attorney

Applicants submitted a Power of Attorney by the Assignee of the Entire Interest of this application which revoked all prior powers of attorney and granted a new power of attorney to the customer number with which the undersigned attorney is associated. The Power of Attorney document was submitted with an Amendment and Response on April 20, 2005. However, the Advisory Action mailed April 28, 2005, was not mailed to the address listed on the new Power of Attorney. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner ensure entry of the aforementioned Power of Attorney and send any communication in response to this paper to the correspondence address listed thereon.

Respectfully submitted,

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